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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0150
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2081
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0032
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 0020

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 006442

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/17/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [PTER](#) [ARABL](#) [EG](#) [GU](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: GUATEMALA VS. VENEZUELA: ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARIAT
INSTRUCTS NEW YORK OFFICE TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE

Classified by Minister Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs William Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The Charge called Arab League (AL) Secretariat Chief of Staff Hisham Youssef on October 17 to request League assistance with Guatemala's bid for a UN Security Council seat, and to complain about public remarks attributed to the AL's New York representative Yahya Mahmassani's - seemingly in support of Venezuela's bid. Youssef was unaware of the reported comments or details of the previous day's balloting, but promised to check into the matter and respond. Shortly afterwards, Youssef called the Charge saying he agreed that Mahmassani's comments were "unhelpful," that he had called the League's NY office, and had instructed them to "cool it" regarding public statements on the election.

¶2. (C) Pressed by the Charge on whether the League Secretariat would step in to assist Guatemala's candidacy

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given the current stalemate in balloting, Youssef said that he had also instructed the NY office to be "constructive" and to help to "find a solution." Post is also in touch with the Guatemalan Embassy DCM who called poloff on October 17 asking the U.S. Embassy to weigh in with the Arab League Secretariat and help sway Arab votes toward Guatemala. The DCM, Jose Manuel Azurdia Longo, expressed his appreciation for the Charge's call to Hisham Youssef at the League, and promised to report the conversation to his ministry. Longo told poloff that he understood Egypt had voted for Guatemala in the first ten rounds of balloting, but that many other Arab states had supported Venezuela.

JONES